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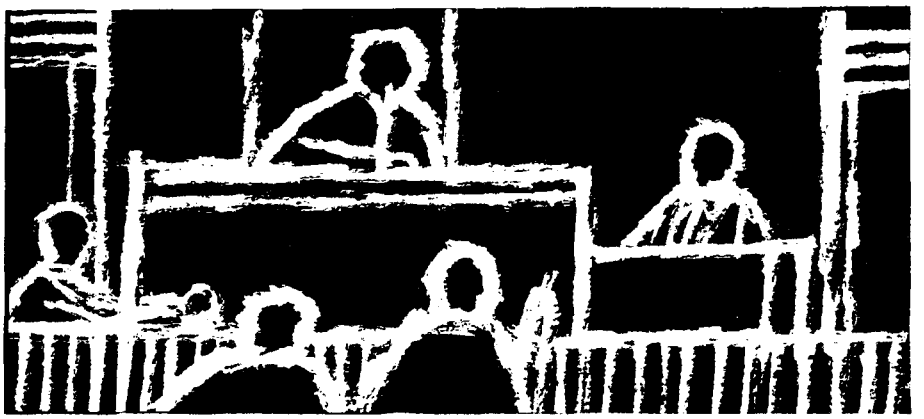

GOD AND THE DRAFT

Can non-believers be conscientious objectors?

Edward N. Beiser

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REDISCOVERING JUDAISM

Arthur A. Cohen

MARAT/SADE

Paul Velde

THE MINOR NOVELIST

Wilfrid Sheed

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NEWS AND VIEWS

How the U.S. subsidizes China in South Vietnam: "The pick of the stories now going the rounds is that Chinese gold purchases in recent months have been to some extent a cashing in of dollars acquired from Vietnam. In Saigon, prostitution is said to be almost wholly controlled by the Vietcong, and the girls are still required to demand payment in dollars, although American troops have been paid in scrip since October. Here, at least, the dollar has not reached the limits of acceptability. Moreover, Vietcong agents are said to extort dollar payments in a variety of ways, among others by guaranteeing safe passage for supplies coming to Saigon through territory infested by guerrillas. The Vietcong, according to this version, use the dollars to pay for some Chinese aid; the Chinese convert these dollars into sterling in Hongkong and use the proceeds to buy gold in London." *The Economist*, Feb. 5, 1966

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The Catholic Peace Fellowship is publishing a 16-page booklet, *Catholics and Conscientious Objection*, by James Forest, national secretary of the Fellowship. Intended as an introduction to the subject, it covers statements from prominent Catholics, historical background, the relevant passages from the Council Schema on the Church and the Modern World, and the current legal situation for CO's in America. It is available for 25 cents from the Fellowship, 5 Beekman Street, New York City, 10038.

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The Commonweal Club of Los Angeles recently sponsored a debate on Vietnam. *Comment*, the student newspaper of Immaculate Heart College, began its report as follows: "The Commonweal Club was packed with an interesting variety of liberals, far-liberals, moderate liberals and Catholics. . . ."

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We love Boston, but. . . : The University of Oklahoma press is publishing a series of books under the heading "Centers of Civilization." Some previous titles: Athens in the Age of Pericles, Rome in the Augustan Age, Constantinople in the Age of Justinian, Aix-la-Chapelle in the Age of Charlemagne. The newest title, just out, is Boston in the Age of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

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Bishop Robert Dwyer of Reno, Nevada, in his syndicated column for February 11, offers the opinion that in our recent "New Morality" debate, (COMMONWEAL, January 14), Father Herbert McCabe, O.P., got much the worse of the exchange. "It is simply honesty," writes the bishop, "to concede that Dr. Fletcher is the winner hands down."

We would add that on the basis of mail and the personal soundings of editors, it appears that general popular opinion is that Dr. Fletcher won the debate, but that among professionals—theologians and philosophers, both Protestant and Catholic—the general feeling was that Father McCabe was the winner.

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In its January 22 issue, *The Economist* offered the opinion that the forthcoming visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Vatican would be less dramatic, but more significant than the 1960 meeting between Dr. Fisher and Pope John. The article drew this letter from Dr. Fisher:

"You say that my visit to see Pope John XXIII was treated somewhat furtively by the Vatican, whose officials acted as if my presence made them highly nervous. It was worse than that. The officials were determined that I should be received without any special attentions. They even decided that I should not see Cardinal Bea, the head of the new department for inter-Church relations. Pope John thought otherwise. . . . He saw to it that I was received with all the honors which Vatican protocol provides for specially distinguished visitors. He himself told me with emphasis that I should see Cardinal Bea that very afternoon. The Pope used my visit, I think, to break down once and for all the old frigidities of Vatican protocol; and between us we abolished all over the world the age-long barriers which were preventing Anglicans and Romans from getting to know each other, from learning to respect and like each other and from practicing together the courtesies which belong to the citizens of the Kingdom of God."

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A Spanish bishop has suggested that worker-priests might be trained for work in Spain. Bishop Antonio Anoveros Abaun of Cadiz said that "up to now, such a matter as that of the working priests has not come before the Spanish episcopacy," but that the hierarchy has discussed "the question of forming priests for an open, effective, genuinely priestly apostolate among the working people." The use of worker-priests to close the gap between the Church and the workers, he said, should not be confined to France, since the problem is hardly confined to France.

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In a paper delivered February 14 at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, Father William H. DuBay called for a union of priests, to be affiliated eventually with the AFL-CIO. Priests, he said, should have grievance machinery, tenure rights, an acceptable policy for promotions and transfer, a definition of professional responsibility, and the freedom to preach what is in accord with Catholic doctrine. Father DuBay, one of the Los Angeles priests who ran afoul of Cardinal McIntyre by preaching on racial justice, touched off a national furore in 1964 by publicly calling on Pope Paul to remove the Cardinal for malfeasance in office. He is the author of *The Human Church*, due shortly from Doubleday.

JOHN LEO

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CORRESPONDENCE

"The Catholic Campus"

San Francisco, Calif.

To the Editors: Everyone interested in the improvement of Catholic higher education in the United States will be grateful to the Dean of the Graduate School of Fordham University for his thoughtful and perceptive article in your issue of January 28 ("The Catholic Campus Today," by Joseph F. Mulligan) where he summarized the findings of the Danforth report on the 817 church-related colleges. I would beg to differ on only a minor point. He quite rightly stated that all Catholic universities have suffered from "inadequate facilities and lack of funds," and he then added, "and no one of them has shone forth as the brilliant light of the world Newman hoped they would be." In my judgment a single institution has substantially fulfilled Newman's ideal, *viz.*, the Catholic University of Louvain, easily the most respected Catholic university in the academic world.

JOHN TRACY ELLIS

O'Neill and Morality

Santa Clara, Calif.

To the Editors: Was it simply a happy coincidence or forethought that Thomas Curley's essay on Eugene O'Neill was printed in the same issue (January 14) as the articles on the New Morality?

The quotation from "The Iceman Cometh" with Curley's preceding sentences offered an extraordinary apt evaluation and condemnation of the New Morality: "He firmly believes that he has delivered himself from illusion by murdering his wife, whom he loved. Year after year he had betrayed her, and year after year she forgave him. There was no way out but to kill her. Hickey goes on at some length as to why their love for each other made his murder of her necessary. And this conviction of the goodness of his motive explains Hickey's contempt for Parritt

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THE VIETNAM DEBATE

The Senate debate on Vietnam began pleasantly enough with Senator Russell B. Long, the Democratic whip, impugning the loyalty of Administration critics. The Senator cited "very high sources" in the government as authority for his accusation that "Every time a Senator makes another speech in fear that Red China might come in, he helps the Communist cause." The full text of Sen. Long's remarks makes incredible reading, and it is hard to believe the discussion can go anywhere but upward from here. Until that happy time, however, we are left with the disturbing suggestion that Senator Long may indeed reflect the Administration's main line of attack against its critics, and even against the principle of open debate.

Less crudely, a similar note was struck the next day by Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor during his testimony before the Fulbright committee. The General, drawing a comparison between criticism of the Indochina War in France in 1954 and criticism in Washington today, stated it was his personal feeling Hanoi hopes "that the same kind of situation will arise here." It was, of course, the French people who, in electing Mendès-France, chose to end French involvement in the war. By Gen. Taylor's argument it was therefore the French people who were disloyal. But this is merely playing games with words. What is important about the whole tack Administration spokesmen have taken thus far is their seeming willingness to poison the political atmosphere for the purpose of distracting attention away from questions of policy. We are not so far removed from the poisoned well of the fifties to view it lightly.

About those elusive questions of policy, Gen. Taylor had revealing things to say, but he did little to help define the scope of our commitment and the means by which we hope to fulfill it. Once again we were treated

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to the vague terminology of "freedom and self-determination" for South Vietnam; the means, according to Gen. Taylor, involved persuading Hanoi through attrition of manpower and "the loss and pain" of bombing to make peace. There could be no compromise with the Vietcong, he added under questioning. This was described as a "limited" war, as opposed to Sen. Mansfield's criticism that our objectives imply an "open-ended" war with no end in sight.

What is revealing is that until now most observers had interpreted President Johnson's offers to negotiate as a willingness to compromise on the matter of the Vietcong. Yet with no politically viable government in Saigon, it is not surprising the U.S. is not attracted to the idea of coalition with the Communists. To some, it would look like a defeat for the U.S. and understandably the Administration is reluctant to accept it.

Thus, recognizing the Vietcong certainly will not solve the problem of peacemaking in Vietnam by itself. Along with this is the equally important task of restoring the constitutional legitimacy of the Saigon regime which Diem embodied for a brief period. In a sense, this is going back to the Geneva accords. Jean Lacouture of *Le Monde* makes the point that the NLF is an essential element of this legitimacy "because it is the heir to the revolt against Diem . . . as well as the principal force of resistance to foreign intervention." But there are others who make up the social and political society of South Vietnam as well—the Buddhists, Catholics, the army. It is these disenfranchised elements of South Vietnamese society that hold the key to any settlement acceptable to both the U.S. and the Vietcong.

THE LENTEN FAST

As far as we can see, the Lenten fast has never had much of a lobby, one way or the other. Its demise, now that Pope Paul has cut it down to two days, is hardly a victory or a defeat for any faction in the Church, though we suppose there will be those who deplore it as a new success in undermining traditional ways. More likely, it is a recognition on the Pope's part that this mode of observing a penitential season no longer fits the strains or variety of modern life. A long season of fast must be puzzling to Catholics in countries where the official Lenten minimum far exceeds the maximum available in the area. Even in the well-developed, over-fed countries, the strain it imposes on some Catholics, chiefly for reasons of health, leads to the complications of rules for dispensations and the inevitable development of troubled consciences in borderline cases. Too often, the fast hardens into a legalism that obscures its purpose—far better to promote the purpose itself, leaving its manifestation up to the individual, than to be left merely promoting the law.

The formation of troubled consciences over the fast is still not being met. The general obligation toward a spirit of penitence during Lent is unquestioned, but are the harsh penalties justified? Many people, on the basis of the Church's teaching, still think they may be punished with eternal damnation for willfully eating between meals on a fast day. Hell is surely a harder place to get into than that. And, of course, the threat of penalties helps deflect the purpose of Catholics in keeping the fast in the first place. Instead of the intended free response, we all too often get the arid rule-keeping and legal maneuvering that the Church is supposed to be transcending.

It may well be that more people will respond to threats and penalties than to the preaching of a general obligation to respect the season. But then the response will be debased to the extent that it is compelled and not won.

The problem for the Church here is one it faces on many fronts: how to get across a general obligation without freezing it into law. Law has the advantage of being concrete, readily understandable and enforceable. For that reason, many tend to see it as the only buttress against the threat of indifferentism. But behind this idea lies a lack of confidence in the individual Catholic, a fear that the reliance on personal conscience will be interpreted to mean that nothing is required here. This is the kind of pessimism and fear that has been on the defensive all during the *aggiornamento*, as it deserves to be. Surely we have the resources to steer a course between legalism and indifferentism. The Lenten season is hardly the most crucial issue, but it's a place to start.

LATIN AMERICA, TO DATE

At the end of the fifties, a private group made a major study of what course American foreign policy should take in the next decade. Much money was disbursed to various research institutions across the country to study such areas as General Goals, Foreign Aid, Asian Problems, and Arms Control. A striking fact about the study was one of its omissions: there was no consideration of future policy toward Latin America.

Could it be the lack of preparedness such as omission suggests that is responsible for the drift of U.S.

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Latin American policy? Every day brings a few more small items in the news—drops of rain washing off whatever remains of the *Alianza's* polish, replacing it with a layer of rust. A report in *The Economist* from Santo Domingo (February 12) hints that the U.S. might not be too unhappy with a military-led, right-wing coup. The New York *Times* (February 6) reports that our closest friends in Latin America, the Brazilian military regime, has suspended direct, popular election of that country's next president as well as of the governors of 11 states and the mayors of major cities. The regime's unchallenged presidential candidate, General Artur Costa e Silva, returned from a tour of Europe to be greeted at the airport by "more than 60 generals" (New York *Times*, February 17). *The New Republic* (January 22) reports that the State Department has cut foreign aid to Peru's progressive government in reaction to Peruvian efforts to get a share of oil profits being reaped by a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey. A U.S.-sponsored research project, investigating the effectiveness of government counter-insurgency operations, is currently under attack in the Colombian legislature.

There are a few events which are brighter. The proposed U.S.-Panama treaty abrogating the anachronistic 1903 treaty seems reasonable enough. Panama's sovereignty over the Canal Zone is to be recognized; Panama is to get a share in the administration of the canal and a larger proportion of the tolls; and the treaty will be up for revision or cancellation after a definite number of years. The Senate must consider and pass on the new treaty some time this year, and already a right-wing attack has been launched on it as a "surrender," etc. Nonetheless, the real difficulty could come from Panama where years of semi-colonial status have resulted in hostilities which make any settlement with the U.S. a hot potato for Panamanian politicians.

The Panama treaty is matched in hopefulness by the Chilean Christian Democrats' efforts to work out an agreement with the large American copper interests in Chile. Chile's President Frei is still having his own domestic political troubles; but at least he did not encounter the sort of American intervention on behalf of U.S. business interests which has so often narrowed and distorted our Latin American policy.

Neither the Panama treaty nor the Chile copper settlement is anything more than just and reasonable. But they look very good by contrast.

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

HUMPHREY AND 1972

There is a myth that no one seeks the Vice Presidency. The occupants of that office are supposed to be chosen by accident or in a fit of absence of mind. The myth continues that once elected, a Vice President is doomed to perpetual boredom and frustration.

Hubert Horatio Humphrey is a cheerful, convincing refutation of that myth. As early as 1952, he was hoping for second place on the ticket. He actively sought the nomination in 1956 but he was squeezed out by the rival candidacies of John Kennedy and Estes Kefauver. He finally made it in 1964 after assiduously campaigning for Lyndon Johnson's favor, both publicly and privately, for several months. Now, despite the erratic publicity he receives while performing such chores as his quick trip to Vietnam this month, Humphrey does not regret his decision. He enjoys and thrives on the job, all the gossip to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Vice Presidency is attractive to an ambitious politician because it can lead to the Presidency. The odds are approximately one in five that an incumbent will die or be assassinated. I do not mean that politicians sit around like ghouls making unpleasant calculations but, as a hard practical fact, they like everyone else take into account a President's mortality. The vice presidential nomination was bitterly fought for at the 1944 Democratic Convention because of Franklin Roosevelt's precarious health. It was the subject of backstage maneuvering before the 1956 Republican Convention because of the same concern about Dwight Eisenhower. In the former case, the expected event did occur; in the latter, it did not.

If death does not open the way to the White House, publicity may. A Vice President takes on some of the glamour and prestige of the Presidency. He is, by definition, a national and international figure. Again, Richard Nixon's career does not bear out this theory. (Nothing seems to work quite right for him.) Kennedy destroyed Nixon's margin as the more experienced candidate because he outperformed him in their first television debate. Nevertheless, politicians still believe that the Vice Presidency gives a man a competitive edge over his potential rivals for the top job. This considera-

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tion is particularly important for an aspiring candidate who is handicapped because he comes from a relatively small state (such as Kefauver of Tennessee and Humphrey of Minnesota) or because he suffers from a regional stereotype (as did Johnson of Texas).

My own view is that if Humphrey manages his situation properly, he cannot be prevented from winning the Democratic nomination in 1972 over his chief rival, Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York. Like Nixon in a similar situation in 1960, Humphrey has the President's chancy health going for him. Local and state politicians do not like to commit themselves against a Vice President for fear that at any moment, fate may make him President and they will then be in disfavor. Considerations of this kind worked against Governor Nelson Rockefeller when he was challenging Nixon six years ago; they will work against Bob Kennedy in any future contest with Humphrey.

What strategy should Humphrey pursue if Kennedy challenges him for a future presidential nomination? Logically, he should avoid primaries where he runs the risk that Kennedy's money, organizational ability, and legendary family appeal could produce a string of defeats. Rather, Humphrey should take the line that his services to the party and the nation are well-known, that they entitle him to the nomination, and that he is not obliged to enter an exhausting round of primary contests. Some of his friends have already tendered Humphrey sound advice along these lines, but whether he will be able to follow it is uncertain. By temperament, he is a go-getter and an activist who often feels a compulsion to react to other men's moves even when his mind tells him a policy of silence and passivity might better serve his interests.

Humphrey enjoys his present job even though he has to labor under the harshest taskmaster in Washington. Mr. Johnson demands total loyalty, prompt obedience, and enthusiastic public support. Even slavish flattery does not embarrass him; staff members such as Jack Valenti can heap praise on his "antennae" and his Lincolnesque qualities without any fear of private rebuke. (This need for public adulation and reassurance betrays an odd streak of insecurity in a man who has so often proved his competence.) Like most people, Humphrey finds it wearing to have to collaborate with his exacting chief. But Humphrey has a tough hide and a sense of humor. He can take it. Nor is his experience unique. Probably half of the industrial tycoons in the country as well as a good many figures of petty authority are just as hard to work for as President Johnson is. Humphrey can and does joke about his difficult job.

Moreover, Humphrey can disagree with Mr. Johnson in private and get away with it. The President may lose his temper and not like it, but he will listen. This is particularly true in certain areas such as civil rights, farm policy, and relations with labor unions, Negroes, and liberals where he realistically recognizes that Humphrey has more experience and a wider circle of acquaintances than he himself does. Humphrey, for example, played an influential role in persuading the President a year ago to come out for a stronger voting rights bill.

Humphrey's influence is not so effective in foreign affairs. He is present at almost all top-level briefings and conferences but there is no evidence that he would be successful if he tried to push a viewpoint on any particular problem that ran counter to the advice of Secretary of State Dean Rusk or Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Does he actually have a different viewpoint on Vietnam? This question is not really susceptible of a clear-cut answer. First of all, Humphrey does not have a clear "line" because he is genuinely troubled by the complexities of the problem and by the unattractiveness of every available option. Secondly, if Humphrey were President, he would follow a different approach to Vietnam than Mr. Johnson if only because he is a different kind of person, but he believes that it would be highly irresponsible to promote any public dissidence within the Administration. Some of his liberal admirers are disenchanted with Humphrey; they feel he should actively push the peace program advocated by Senators Fulbright and Morse. But this is a romantic view. Humphrey is no longer a senator. Aside from his nominal duties as presiding officer of the Senate, he is effectively a member of the executive branch of the Government. If he were to let it be known that he was fighting the Administration's foreign policy, that would open up a schism and weaken the President in a way that most liberals under other circumstances would deplore.

Most observers agree that Humphrey was too exuberant in his public statements during his recent trip to Vietnam and neighboring countries. But exuberance is his natural style, and no real harm was done. The development of propaganda themes and the injection of some idealism into the conduct of a difficult politico-military war are legitimate functions for a Vice President whose talents lie in that direction. Humphrey is following in the footsteps of Vice President Henry A. Wallace who during World War II projected visions of a world of full employment, free men, and a quart of milk for every child. Humphrey, like Wallace, is often selling dreams, but people need dreams as well as bread to live by.

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

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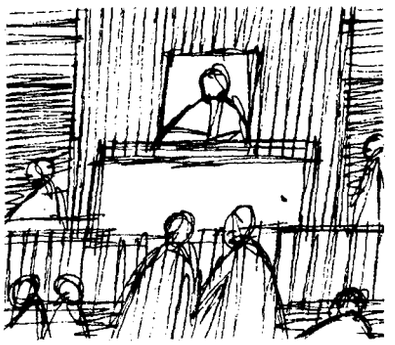

GOD AND THE DRAFT

Can non-believers be conscientious objectors?

EDWARD N. BEISER

At least since the days of Gideon, military recruitment has posed serious problems both for governments attempting to maintain armed forces, and for individuals seeking to avoid military service. Most recently, draft card burnings and the pronouncements of groups like the Students for a Democratic Society have pushed the question of the conscientious objector to the forefront of the American political scene.

Compulsory military service in some form has been a part of the American experience from the start; nine of the state constitutions adopted during the Revolutionary War included such provisions. Of equal antiquity are the claims of conscientious objectors, which James Madison sought to incorporate into the Bill of Rights. As reported out by a select committee of the House of Representatives, the Bill of Rights would have guaranteed that "no person *religiously scrupulous* shall be compelled to bear arms" (italics added). The Senate rejected Madison's proposal, so that the Constitution provides no explicit support for the conscientious objector. Indeed, the fact that Madison proposed this exemption for the "religiously scrupulous" is generally understood to demonstrate that none of the other constitutional guarantees (freedom of religion, for example) provides exemption from military service.

The problems of conscientious objectors really only began with the entry of this country into World War I. The conscription statute of May 18, 1917, narrowly restricted exemptions to members of "any well recognized religious sect" whose creed forbade its members to participate in "war in any form. . . ."

As World War II approached, the pacifist churches worked actively to have the 1917 exemption significantly expanded. The text of the provision finally included in the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 grew out of a draft proposed by the Friends War Problems Committee, which was substantially watered down by officers of the Army War College. It provided exemptions from "combatant training and service" to anyone who, "by reason of *religious training and belief*, is conscientiously opposed to participation in *war in any form*" (italics added).

While many objections to the 1917 statute had been raised, its meaning was never in doubt. Membership in "well recognized religious sects" is a reasonably well defined concept. But what constitutes a refusal to serve "by reason of religious training and belief?" Two significantly different lines of judicial interpretation developed around this phrase.

One of the nation's most distinguished federal judges —Augustus Hand—interpreted the phrase very broadly in a 1943 case. Any "conscientious scruple against war in any form" came within the definition "religious belief." A "compelling voice of conscience" was all that the statute required.

Other federal judges, however, insisted that the phrase be read in a more restrictive light. The case of *Berman v. U.S.* ruled that the phrase "religious beliefs"

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was intended by Congress to limit exemptions to those who felt a responsibility to "an authority higher and beyond any worldly one," in short, belief in a Supreme Being. Purely "moralistic philosophy" was not grounds for exemption.

The Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1948 (which, in this connection, is in effect today) attempted to eliminate this confusion. "Religious training and belief" was defined to include "an individual's belief in a relation to a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation, but does not include essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code. . . ."

During the 1950's, the federal courts consistently held that this "Supreme Being clause" did not discriminate unconstitutionally against agnostic conscientious objectors (*U.S. v. Bendik*) and that it did not constitute an establishment of religion. (*Clark v. U.S.*)

Three cases which began to wind their way through the federal courts in the early 1960's provided the Supreme Court with the opportunity of speaking out on these questions. Forest Britt Peter was denied conscientious objector status by his draft board. In reply to the question "Do you believe in a Supreme Being," he described the nature of his "religious belief," quoting favorably the language of Rev. John Haynes Holmes: "Religion is the consciousness of some power manifest in nature which helps man in the ordering of his life in harmony with its demands. . . . [It] is the supreme expression of human nature; it is man thinking his highest, feeling his deepest, and living his best."

On October 30, 1963, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld the draft board's determination that Peter's convictions did not fall within the statute's definition of religious belief based on a relation to a Supreme Being, Peter appealed to the Supreme Court.

Arno Sascha Jakobson's religious beliefs came before the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit one month later. Jakobson defined religion as "the sum and essence of one's basic attitudes to the fundamental problems of human existence." He recognized the existence of "Godness"--an "ultimate cause" or creator of all existence. The way to arrive closer to "Godness" was by approaching the universals inherent in existence. And the taking of human life was incompatible with this view. The hearing officer found that the claim was based upon a personal moral code rather than on religious belief as defined by the 1948 Act. He classified Jakobson for combat service.

The Court of Appeals reversed the draft board. Quoting at length from Paul Tillich, the court insisted that "The statute clearly does not require belief in an anthropomorphic deity breathing, like the God of the Sistine ceiling, over the waters. Long before 1948 men whose belief in a Supreme Being would not have been questioned had substituted the notion of 'God out there' for 'God up there.'" This time the government appealed.

Note that neither the Peter case nor the Jakobson case turned on questions of constitutional rights. Both decisions were based on the question: what did a belief in a Supreme Being involve? The case of *Seeger v. United States* raised significantly different questions.

Daniel Andrew Seeger (not to be confused with the folk singer) refused to assert a simple belief or disbelief in the existence of a Supreme Being. Since the question "cannot be proven or disproven," he preferred to leave it open. The government admitted that Seeger's abhorrence of war was sincere, and was based on "religious training and belief" as that phrase had been understood prior to the 1948 addition of the Supreme Being clause. But due to this addition, he simply did not come within the terms of the statute. The Federal District Court upheld the draft board's decision. On January 20, 1964, the Court of Appeals reversed it, on the grounds that the Supreme Being clause violated the federal constitution.

For the Supreme Being requirement, no matter how broadly defined, "cannot embrace all those faiths which can validly claim to be called 'religious.'" Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture, and Secular Humanism are among the religions which do not include belief in a Supreme Being. The Supreme Being clause, therefore, reflected a governmental decision favoring certain religions, and discriminating against others. And this, said the court, the Constitution prohibited. If an exemption were to be granted to religious believers, it had to be granted to all religious believers—not only *theists*.

On March 8, 1965, the Supreme Court announced its decision in the three cases—Seeger, Jakobson, and Peter.

The Court's opinion did not deal with the constitu-

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nal questions which had been raised. Instead, it ned solely on one question: the meaning of the tute. The court felt that Congress had used the ession "Supreme Being" rather than "God" deliberly. Congress was attempting to clarify the meaning "religious training and belief" so as to embrace all igions, and to exclude essentially political, sociolog-l, or philosophical views. And the court articulated a which would demonstrate whether a given set of iefs was "religious" as opposed to "political, sociolog-l, or philosophical":

The test of belief 'in a relation to a Supreme Being' whether a given belief that is sincere and meaningful upies a place in the life of its possessor parallel to t filled by the orthodox belief in God of one who arly qualifies for the exemption."

The term Supreme Being as used by Congress did not uire a belief in the orthodox God—simply any sine belief which filled the place that this belief filled the traditionally religious man. By applying this ding to the 1948 clause, the statute could be upheld. But the court was not satisfied with the demonstran that this broad interpretation of the Supreme Being use was consistent with the intent of the framers of bill. It went on to cite such major judicial authors as Paul Tillich, the Bishop of Woolwich (John T. Robinson), and the Schema of the Ecumenical uncil in order to "reveal the difficulties inherent in cing too narrow a construction on the provisions of statute, and thereby lend conclusive support to the nstruction which we today find that Congress inded."

The court then turned to the specifics of the three es at hand. Jakobson's "Godness" and Peter's "power nifest in nature . . . the supreme expression" that ps man in ordering his life, easily fell within the nds of its definition. But what about Seeger? Since had professed "religious belief," *and had not disowed* any belief in a relation to a Supreme Being, he was covered by the statute. Indeed, Seeger's statents reminded the court of Professor Tillich's ughts:

And if that word [God] has not much meaning for , translate it, and speak of your life, of the source of r being, of your ultimate concern, *of what you take ously without any reservation.*"

n sum, the Supreme Court's recent pronouncements e not affected the *constitutional* status of the conntious objector. There is no constitutional right to se to serve; Congress has chosen to exempt religious ectors—and only religious objectors. What the court done is to point out that Congress intended the statutory exemption granted to religious conscientious objectors to apply to a great many individuals who probably never realized that they were included within the terms of the statute.

It is also relevant to contemporary events that all of the legislation and litigation surrounding this subject has assumed that the objection is to all war—not to particular wars. The prediction of judicial decisions is an exceedingly tricky business, but it is probably safe to say that claims based on moral opposition to specific wars (Vietnam, for example) would be rejected by the courts as not falling within the exemption granted by Congress in its generous wisdom.

The status of the "nonreligious" conscientious objector—the outright atheist and secularist—is much less clear.

The *Seeger* opinion suggests that the justices are in no hurry to reach this question. And for obvious reasons! Consider the choices with which they would be faced.

The *Seeger* decision has so broadened the judicial definition of religion that the claim that Congress has discriminated against some religions will not longer apply. The atheist's only possible argument is that the granting of the exemption to the religious objector alone constitutes an establishment of religion. What can the court reply to this charge? Notice that the atheist's objection does not say that he has a right to be excused; the courts have consistently held that there is no constitutional right to conscientiously decline to serve. At most he claims that the religious objector does not have such a right—that his exemption is based on the establishment of religion.

The court cannot rewrite the exemption statute. If it violates the Constitution, the justices must declare it null and void. But the consequence of this is not that atheists would be excused; the consequence is that no one would be exempted. Clearly the court which "interpreted" the 1948 statute so as to include Seeger, Jakobson, and Peter has no desire to eliminate the exemptions granted to Quakers and Mennonites.

It is, of course, true that were the Supreme Court to void the exemption provisions of the Selective Service Act, Congress would be under pressure to immediately enact a broadened exemption. Indeed, this may well come about. Nevertheless, I would hazard the guess that the court can be expected to employ a variety of techniques at its disposal so as to avoid the atheist's claim entirely. From a purely theoretical standpoint, he may be right. But, as Felix Frankfurter once put it, "constitutional law . . . is not at all a science, but applied politics. . . ."

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"The only excuse for the Jew is God"

REDISCOVERING JUDAISM

ARTHUR A. COHEN

To rediscover Judaism is to presume that it has been lost, that like some island in an archipelago it had once been discovered, identified, mapped, but that in the ensuing years its discoverers had forgotten it; sea charts and maps had disappeared; travellers familiar with its terrain had died. Only centuries later, odd rummagers and happenstance wayfarers had come upon it once more—surrounded by blue water, dripping with breadfruit and mangoes, lush, endowed, beautiful to behold. Could that be Judaism? Or better still, does the editor, Arnold Jacob Wolf, and his co-contributors to *Rediscovering Judaism* (Quadrangle Books, $6.50) regard Judaism as forgotten, but never lost? This latter sense seems more accurate for, in truth, there is no lost and found Judaism, nor any old Judaism that requires "new" theology. Rather the issue seems to be that what Judaism once was has been forgotten and, like Hawthorne's famous artifice, is always there in view, but never noticed. Those scrutinizing their environment are apt to pass over contemporary Judaism as something so familiar, conventional, obvious as to be unexceptionable.

Nothing can be more depressing and dispiriting than to stake one's life on something which is regarded as hopelessly unimportant and beside-the-point. This is surely the manifest condition of Judaism in the West. It may well be the condition of Christianity as well, although there are enough signs and trumpetings of activity in recent years, to persuade those of indifferent faith that Christianity is still worth the enterprise. But of Judaism the condition is less sanguine, the rot more palpable, the paralysis more and more indistinguishable from *rigor mortis*.

It is hard not to be gloomy, particularly hard if one cares deeply about Judaism, about the Jewish people (both in its natural flourishing and its supernatural portent), and about the destiny to which ostensibly it is committed. Clearly my gloom is not stylistic nor is it symptomatic of my own loss of conviction and e thusiasm. Quite the opposite. It is because I am hop lessly in love with Jewish tradition that I am gloon

But first, since I intend these comments on *Redisco ering Judaism* to be an anatomy of gloom, it is incu bent that I disengage myself from analyses of the Je ish community which seem optimistic and congratu tory. I am obliged, therefore, to make clear the sou and direction of my gloom and for whose sake a hawthorn wreath is worn.

There is, obviously, no reason to despair of the pub condition of Jews or the communal vitality they co tinue to exhibit. If one were to judge the Americ Jewish community by its physical and social conditi one would pronounce it robust, almost too robust. one were to assess it by the canon of its extenuati life in the State of Israel one would accredit it w meticulous normalcy. If one were to measure its res ency by its ability to deal with the falling pressure anti-Semitism, it must be considered superlatively a justed. The visible community is resplendent, but Juc ism nevertheless shrinks and shrives, displacing less a less weight in the councils of the world.

The Uses of Anti-Semitism

How can this be? How can it be that a healthy co munity, a community which has weathered the c slaughts of history, should be (as I judge it to be) we and flabby, as though from a sybarite's inactivity. can well be! The secular interpreters of Jewish histo those who supplied the rationale for the Ben Guri ideology of the American diaspora, would argue tl the Jew can never be secure in the diaspora, that ar Semitism is an inevitability, that wherever there a Gentiles (read Christians) there is sure to be ar Semitism. There is truth to this thesis, but not sufficie truth to cut through the wall which genuine good v has erected during the past two decades. The Jew now immune to anti-Semitism. He expects certain kir of anti-Semitism but it no longer bothers him. He n has clubs of his own that discourage Gentiles fr

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admission, upper middle-class communities where Christians would feel uncomfortable if they moved (although property values would not plunge), etc. The Jew has mastered the ritual of intolerance as part of his training in American middle-class mediocrity. Only a pogrom or a victory for totalitarianism at the polls would make American Jews uncomfortable and even then, I am sure, there would be quite a few millions of Jews who would support legitimated authority even if it was anti-democratic and ultimately anti-Semitic. Natural Jews are no different than anyone else. Short-sighted, unimaginative, self-interested, they cannot read, better than other creatures, the warning Daniel gives to Belshazzar. Anti-Semitism can no longer be relied upon, therefore, to prompt the Jew to question the order of the world, much less to uproot himself and flee. And why should he? There is, here in America, little or no cause for Jewish alarm. Of course, there were Jewish preachers and teachers who were bound to find the

Vatican Council's Declaration on the Jews unsatisfactory and covertly anti-Semitic, but that order of Jewish neurasthenia is predictable. No Jew should have expected greatly from the Council and certainly no Jew should have used the Declaration, as some Jews have, as an excuse for warning the Jewish community against a new thrust of conversionary activity.

The course of secular history can no longer be employed by Jewish ideologists as a *raison d'être juive,* for there is no evidence that the Gentile world has any particularly neurotic designs against the Jewish community; Jewish homeostasis is pretty well-assured; Jews can continue to lose Jews by intermarriage, conversion, and assimilation and gain them by the same route without serious consequence. The natural Jew is, by and large, absolutely safe.

Secular Jews will read my analysis with annoyance. "What does the damn fool want and, why, for what reason, does he choose COMMONWEAL to set it forth." The answer, as I have made clear many times and as *Rediscovering Judaism* marvelously demonstrates, is that a Jewish people without the Lord of the Covenant is a boring legacy of history, a fossil with fantastic pretension to an enduring claim upon human solicitude. As human beings, surely and forever, the human in the Jew, the ordinary humanity of this natural, accidental, historical creature has the same claim as every man. But as for the Jewish factor in the "human," that addendum which is the gift of revelation, no claim at all —except as the pressure of anti-Semitism determines. If *that* pressure abates, as it does in every country except the Soviet Union, the natural dependence of the Jew for sufferance upon the grace of the Gentile Christian majority diminishes and disappears. The Gentile is no longer a viable excuse for Jewish survival.

The only excuse for the Jew is God and the insane, improbable, increasingly impossible vocation to which he commanded and continues to command the Jew. The first four essays in *Rediscovering Judaism,* those by Lou H. Silberman on the absolute contemporaneity of the theological task in Judaism; Jakob J. Petuchowski's faultlessly honest exposition of the difficulties of a revealed theology which tries to stand without reason, supplemented and extended by Emil Fackenheim's brilliant analysis of the problems of a revealed morality, and fulfilled by what is the most moving and fresh discussion in the volume, Monford Harris' essay on the centrality of the Jewish People as the source and substance of Jewish theology, make the volume. The remaining essays add fillips and wrinkles—Arnold Wolf's discussion of psychoanalysis and the Jewish psychology of man and Steven S. Schwarzschild's alternately suggestive and hortatory attempt to establish the relevance of Jewish tradition to issues of war and peace—are worth noting.

What is alive in *Rediscovering Judaism* is that there are Jews who are taking the trouble to make the rediscovery. They are not Jews of a single persuasion nor Jews without significant disagreements. What unites them, however, is an order of seriousness that, as The Sayings of the Fathers has put it, "the Master is impatient." He was impatient in the times of the Bible; He was impatient with the Rabbis who composed the homilies on His impatience and He has continued to be impatient. What the authors of *Rediscovering Judaism* make clear is that the Jewish People is a People with a hand at its throat, but the hand is not only the hand of man and history. It is as well the hand of God. The gloom that I have is that so few Jews feel this hand—most conduct the business of the world without a tremor of holy insecurity. What makes hope possible or at least lifts the gloom sufficiently to let COMMONWEAL readers in on a new "Jewish conspiracy" is that some Jews still feel the hand pressing.

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Revolution on stage

MARAT / SADE

PAUL VELDE

Is "Marat/Sade" fated to be another "Tiny Alice" for the critics, a celebrated puzzle embellished by a tantalizing dance of discrete themes? Does it, in fact, deserve such a fate? The first wave of reviews would seem to give that impression. Homage is justly paid to its totally gripping theatrical effects, a blending of Brecht and the theories of Artaud, but little else has caught on. "It is to be seen, but not believed," as one critic wrote, generally sums up the attitude.

Some of the critics were noncommittal; others took exception to the violence of the play that seemed to have no redeeming features. Everybody seems to agree the play has a thesis somewhere in it, but since nobody felt obliged to reveal what it was, it is unclear what we are not to believe. Otherwise the consensus is clear enough; go see this total use of the theater; even though you won't know exactly what it is being used for, the total animation is something to see. By the same reasoning we go to watch the Fourth of July fireworks display, while disbelieving in the speeches.

That "Marat/Sade" is fireworks nobody would deny; and its subject matter is egregiously in vogue (another stricture against it): The Marquis himself, The Terror, The Revolutionary Idealist (Marat, however, a product of the Enlightenment, is beardless), The Mob, assassination. It catches current stock rhythms quite as breathlessly as the congressman returned from Washington for the glorious Fourth. But having made note of this, and taken precautions, what are we left with? Is the play at its center a vacuum; or, on the contrary, can we believe its author, Peter Weiss, when he calls it revolutionary?

By now it is generally known that Weiss' play hangs on a historical footnote: that de Sade, while confined to the Asylum of Charenton, wrote and directed plays performed by the inmates as a form of therapy. Paris high society frequented the performances for kicks; on stage we are presumably watching such a production, i.e., a play by de Sade about the assassination of Marat stabbed in his tub by Charlotte Corday. Hence the long descriptive title, "The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade."

Perhaps a better shorthand for the title of the play would be "Marat/Sade/Weiss." Weiss encompasses Sade who in turn encompasses Marat. At this point a sort of feedback takes over that complicates the relationships *ad infinitum*, and which makes following a line of argument impossible. Weiss and Sade share control over the asylum inmates, who perform at the same time in both Weiss' and Sade's plays; the audience, represented on the stage by the Director of Charenton, his wife and daughter, fends uneasily for itself; and all act against the background of the inert past, namely the historical revolution.

Nature also enters the picture, in a particularly undiluted form as the air Sade breathes, and as the focus of his dementia. We are made unsure how to take the Revolution, as primarily historical and thereby to a degree determined by man, or as the result of nature's impersonal, implacable forces. Sade adopts the latter position, while in Marat we see glimpses of a historical consciousness, though one still embedded in the ideals of the Enlightenment. Much of the argument of the play centers on this question of which of the two, nature or history, encloses the other. "We must pull ourselves up by the hair," says Marat, suggesting thereby something of the feat of human transcendence in historical time. Sade, on the other hand, would give unto the Caesarism of nature (i.e., understand it), while treating himself to the kingdom of the imagination, where he reigns as Nero. He shares with Marat, however, a hatred of nature's indifference and cruelty; each seeks to defeat nature's silence, Sade by outdoing it in savagery, Marat by defying its principles, e.g., pulling oneself up by one's own hair.

Culminating Madness

If nature is ultimately what Sade says it is, an impersonal force for pain and cruelty, then one option is to make an orgiastic feast of these elements. It is from

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this point of view that Weiss has Sade write a play about the murder of Marat, making it the culmination of revolutionary madness. It follows that on either side of the revolution history is seen as merely build up to, and let down after, the supreme moment. In line with this, equal time is given to both in Sade's play, so that sometimes one is uncertain whether the mob's grumbling signals the approach of upheaval or discontent with the results. Both contribute to making revolution the apocalyptic manifestation of nature's savagery. As such, they are analogous to elements of Sade's own will to destruction and aberrant sexuality.

That the play within the play is ostensibly written by Sade makes the sexual analogy inevitable, and in a sense it might be the key to Weiss' purpose. The play is strewn throughout with indications that something of the sort is at work. Much of the action involves arbitrary timing by Sade, who directs the inept inmate-actors like pawns on a private chessboard. Thus Charlotte Corday, played by a somnambulist, is restrained from plunging the knife into Marat during her first visit. She must make three trips before performing the act. Interruptions are frequent; an Interruptus occurs as Charlotte's knife-hand hovers over Marat before the deathblow. The direction similarly is all awkwardly accomplished. Mechanical would be a better word, for Sade's weary, patient instructions to the inmates recall the novels and their joylessly orchestrated excitements. Not surprisingly, most of the participants in the novels are also unwilling prisoners of one kind or another. Sade is as inexorable as nature in structuring his pleasures. The waste involved likewise resembles nature's (the revolution's). It is a carnage that Sade directs.

We have, then, on the one hand, Sade taking pleasure, and inviting the audience to do so too, in the carnage of his production, whose victims are the inmates, and, on the other, focusing this carnage, which on another level is the contradictions of the historical revolution, on Marat. Marat's is a fever of contradictions. Sade takes pleasure in stoking the furnace of Marat's brain, but he also delights in the failure of the revolution, which allows him at once to enact more scenes of meaningless pain and to prove his whole point, that, in fact, there is no such thing as history.

One is reminded of Sartre's anti-Semite, for whom history doesn't exist, but only the endless round of persecution and counter-persecution. It is a mediocre vista to which the audience is invited. The persecution of Marat is both a mockery of the idea of history and a challenge to the audience's possibilities of self-transcendence. That Sade is successful in blurring distinctions between natural affliction, paranoia in Marat's case, and feverish alienation that can lead to historical action, casts the audience into a predicament of self-doubt.

We are invited by Sade to our own beheading, actually a lobotomy (one of Marat's scientific theories places the locus of the soul in the brain), and asked to savor the experience. The deception is that only Sade will savor it, by retaining his faculties of imagination. Our role will be that of pawns, like the a-historical inmates of Charenton. "Against Nature's silence," Marat proclaims; "I invent meaning, I don't watch unmoved, I intervene and say this and this is wrong." It is Sade's strength, not ours, that he can answer: "We must first understand ourselves." In the final scene, the radical ex-priest, Jacques Roux, cries out to the mob: "We must make a choice." But the mob tramples over him.

Pleasantly Stimulating

The argument of the play advances by juxtaposition rather than by rational debate. Much is merely asserted. What Weiss has done is perceive the terrain with startling clarity. He attempts to bring us into that charged mindscape by Artaud's device of shock, the so-called "theater of cruelty." As has been remarked numerous times, this presents special problems in an age that has managed to digest or block out the concentration camps, Hiroshima, and today napalmed villages in Vietnam. It is a doubtful assumption to build a play on in any case, for short of wiring the seats, nothing is guaranteed to shock an audience. Even cancer victims are known to lead complacent lives. As for "Marat/Sade," the theatrical techniques are pleasantly stimulating rather than shocking. We are forced to feel with our heads, the ideologue's last refuge when the nerve ends give out.

But the best of art has the capacity of being more real than life itself, and Weiss' play has elements that are truly horrifying to the imagination. For example, Charlotte's arrival in Paris, where dream-like she sees "heaps with eyes and mouths." And the mocking persecution of Marat by figures from his past, in which the spirit is purged and Marat walks upright on the stage for the first time. But the Brechtian song and mime blurs these features. We are left instead with Sade's Macabre in which the revolution is a sensual experience: the "little death" has become the big death.

Thus we return to Weiss' terrain and what possibility it holds of justifying the revolution. The thrust of Weiss' play seems to be that as a sensual experience revolution needs no justification outside itself. In a man-

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ner of speaking, this is the Left's Left, or what Lenin called "Infantile Leftism" and what is today referred to as "revolutionary romanticism." Like sexual experience, at the height of which thoughts are furthest removed from the future of the race, though in fact that is what is at stake, so the revolution at its peak becomes for itself, regardless of consequences. Slavery and humiliation are shelved, a choice is made. The revolution embodies man's depravity and his self-transcendence, his being for another. It is a merging of opposites; in other words, history, whose essence is the human potential. The denial of history is for Weiss, whose play is a compendium of its various forms, the denial of the total human experience; it is to find oneself in an asylum. We are condemned, as it were, to making a choice. But perhaps even more important, Peter Weiss' play puts the locus of history in man, rather than the other way around.

A sketch

THE MINOR NOVELIST

WILFRID SHEED

He works with the blinds down and he doesn't believe that James Bond is a spoof, or that Tom Wolfe is a spoof. He believes that they are nuncios from a world of speed and light and flashing colors, where men like himself are liquefied by deadly invisible rays.

He tries to keep away from Sunday supplements which discuss the death of the novel. He has a theory that it is bad luck to read more than three articles on this subject a week. He also steers clear of annual roundups. "A disappointing year for fiction"—that part is all right: but then his own book isn't even mentioned among the disappointments. He is one of those authors who mysteriously doesn't count. Maybe he should change his name. His present one is a mnemonic disaster.

It is entirely possible that he won't win the National Book award this year. Possible that he will never be published in French or German. None of this would matter so much if the Novel wasn't dying. But it is curiously embarrassing to be a failure at something that is going out of business. Talk about integrating into a sinking ship!

At his best moments, he thinks of himself as the last of the old-fashioned craftsmen, turning out waterclocks or filigreed sleeve-garters. His store window, if he had a store window, would overflow with the very best pre-electronic devices, wind-up toys, stuffed divans, teapots. He should get out more and try to keep up. He can't afford to go abroad, but he could at least make it to a discotheque. Get out of the dead world of childhood and memory.

Instead he reconnoiters the modern world through television. Batman, Bullwinkle and his friends, Soupy Sales. An assault course in irony. Later, when the children grow up, he hopes they will be told what the irony is for. Naturally, he takes all this personally. How can you write for people who start life like that? Everything will always be a gag for them. The twisted version will be the natural version. (A child's first words, "no, but I saw the parody.")

He doesn't want to get worked up about this, because anger pushes him further into the past. But these ironic, electronic children worry him constantly. They are being trained to move quickly, not to care. What kind of novels do you write, either for or about them? Anguish, loss, guilt are for the slow people. To feel these things, you have to have at least taken Batman seriously as a child. You have to have taken *something* seriously.

Newspapers are more reassuring. Newspapers are dying like novels. They resist streamlining, and continue to carry items about, say, heavyweight boxing as if heavyweight boxing still mattered. But the crackle of money in the sports pages is beginning to bother him. At this time of year, especially, it is like walking through an Arab bazaar. Willie Mays signs 150 G pact. Maury Wills holds out for 100 G. (Minor novelist holds out for two big Gs, little hope seen.) The golfers are rated now on their money muscle; even the damn horses are referred to as top-money spinners, dollar-grossers, purse-grabbers. And behind that the cackle

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of the promoters, moving their franchises, signing their quarterbacks, cackle, cackle. It's almost as bad as the book section.

It all makes him nervous. A man without money is slightly deformed these days. The fuel that keeps the new people moving faster than the speed of worry is money. If you leave a girl by jet plane, the speed whisks her away. Adultery ceases to count the moment you cross the International Date Line. Tragedy is just another name for slowness, for stagnation.

So how can a man write about the new thing when he can't afford to fly to Washington? How can he compete with the adventurer-authors who get paid like ballplayers? Well, that isn't his world of course. There are other worlds—poverty, for instance, for what that's worth. His kind of writing will come back. His editor says so every time they have lunch.

His editor believes in him, along with the reviewer from the Providence *Journal* and a select group of others. (If the club was any smaller, he would be obliged to leave the sinking novel right now. After six novels, he might find himself without a publisher.) The trouble is he has difficulty in believing in his editor.

Ed Filmore has a lot of silly enthusiasms and he has backed a lot of losers. He looks at the lunch bill closely these days, adding to himself, and they don't have brandy any more. Filmore is kept on a tight string by old mother publisher.

Yet the wretched Filmore can still generate little contagions of hope. During the incubating period, while the new book is in the womb of the publicity department, he can suggest phenomenal stirrings of interest. Louis Untermeyer loves it. Haven't heard from Robert Penn Warren yet, but it's just his kind of book. The United Hospital Foundation has ordered two hundred copies.

This ghastly charade still works every time. The ego is gently inflated until it reaches maximum distension and becomes abnormally tender. Filmore passes on nothing but good tidings until the victim is soft with good cheer. And then, bursting through Filmore's filter, come the real reviews, the bored ones, the ugly ones; or, as in the case of his last book, no reviews at all.

Ed Filmore reacts at first with baffled indignation, phasing off into his own brand of wistfulness; then he seems to withdraw distastefully from the whole project, as if even he did not care to associate with such bold-faced disgrace. The lunches stop, but the damage is done. Enough wind is left in the ego to make one care about annual roundups, about N.B. Awards and the opinion of Robert Penn Warren that never arrives. Filmore in himself signifies nothing. The publisher shows what he thinks of Filmore by tiny printings and miniscule advertising budgets. Yet Filmore can still dazzle you, he has that small power.

Lesser people and hacks might be broken by all this. But the minor novelist gets a certain sustaining pleasure from this review of grievances. He has endured, and he has learned. (He has learned, for instance, that you don't call a book *A Rose at Dusk,* the title of his last one: it sounded unbelievably fresh and vibrant at the time, but now it wilts sadly.) His books on the shelf are like hard-won highschool trophies: the boy with the flat feet who went out for track and didn't do too badly.

He doesn't *really* believe that the novel is dying. It is too good for that. Maybe the *public* is dying, that's another story. But he believes in the novel. When someone like Robbe Grillet calls for technical innovation, he doesn't know quite where he stands. He agrees in principle, but he wonders whether these people really love the novel as he does, that they should keep wanting to mess with it. There is a contradiction here that he cannot begin to resolve.

The odd and encouraging thing is that he knows he is getting better at the traditional novel. He is mastering his quaint craft, book by book, all the better for being unnoticed perhaps. He has strong views about the evils of early success, although he thinks he is perhaps carrying this prejudice to extremes in his own case.

On his desk there is always a pile of papers to mark and books to review. The books are possibly the greatest threat to his integrity. It seems too much to ask of a man in his position that he gratuitously attack, say Norman Mailer and stir up a swarm of unnecessary partisans against him. (And then again, Mailer was nice to him at a party once and remembered his name.) All this seems very petty, and he pushes it sternly aside. His fiction reviews are in fact rather notably vinegary as he wrestles triumphantly with the demon of log-rolling.

If he is low in his mind at the moment, it is partly just the time of year, and the pictures that come with it of the jet-set sunning themselves, in the pages of *Esquire;* and partly the dying fall of his last novel. It always takes several months to convince himself that it will not live on in paperback, or win an obscure prize or even be reviewed in the *N.Y. Review of Books.* Once vanity has been deflated all the way, he can start on another round. He is not a naturally vain man.

He wonders whether it might help to be just a mite sexier next time out. Publishers are too delicate to mention it, or even to think it, but he can tell a little horseplay would make them happy. He did try a couple

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of sex-scenes last time, and they just sounded silly, and he tore them up. He has nothing against sex, of course, but it isn't everyone who can write about it. Make a note to try once more. If it arises spontaneously.

These regular poundings have toughened him in all kinds of ways. The really hard pill to swallow, once after each book, is the knowledge that his works will almost certainly be out of print long before he dies. The first two are out of print already. To see a chipped copy in a second-hand bookstore is like visiting your own graveyard. Or, to put it another way, the people in the next apartment still haven't heard of him and neither has his daughter's highschool teacher.

He recognizes a large element of fraud in his reasoning. One lobe of his brain indulges in stoic resignation; the other expects the old-fashioned novel to come back, with himself at the fore. It is not a bad working arrangement, so long as he doesn't allow Filmore to agitate it. But if the optimistic lobe goes up too high it must later go down for awhile, and a period of suffering ensues.

The one thing he has not learned is how to modify this ridiculous process. He has tried going away before publication; and he has tried leaving himself completely in Filmore's hands, reading only such reviews as Filmore chooses to send and trusting to the end in his editor's vaguely bracing reports. But nothing helps. As soon as the bell rings, and the first good word comes in from Louis Untermeyer, or from the girl who typed the manuscript, his ego goes berserk, and starts to puff up uncontrollably, he believes, like Hemingway, that he is the champ; he crowds the newsstands eagerly, like one of the boxer-writers, closing in for some unspecified kill. And he gets murdered every time.

Outside of that, he believes that his life is probably slightly happier than most people's.

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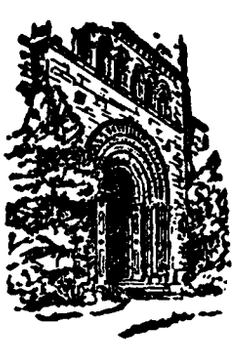

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PASOLINI'S MATTHEW

THE SCREEN

The appearance in this country of the highly praised "The Gospel According to St. Matthew," made by an Italian Communist, will probably start anew the controversy about whether *any* actor can successfully portray Christ on stage or screen. I realize, looking back on my reviews of "King of Kings" (the 1961 version) and last year's "The Greatest Story Ever Told," that I doubted that the life of Christ could be told in a realistic medium like cinema, ". . . each man, particularly those conditioned by reading, religious pictures and church art, conceives and visualizes Christ for himself."

The Protestants, some of whom even objected to one of Dali's crucifixion paintings because the Christ figure looked too much like a handsome, well-built baseball player, seem more worried about this problem than the Catholics and carried on interesting discussions after "Greatest Story" appeared. As might be expected, the arguing ended in a draw, with some writers still insisting that a screen representation of Christ restricted the imagination and spiritual response of the viewer, while others remained convinced that an encounter with Christ in movies or art stimulated interest and spiritual growth. Although I doubt that many people after seeing the two American films continued for very long to visualize their Christ in the form of Jeffrey Hunter or Max von Sydow, I am still divided on the advisability of life-of-Christ films. "The Gospel According to St. Matthew," however, although by no means perfect, is certainly the best so far and could swing my vote in favor of them.

Director Pier Paolo Pasolini, describing how he happened to make the film, says he was in Assisi one day when a visit by Pope John brought all traffic to a halt. Stuck in his hotel room with only a Bible to read, Paso-

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lini was so impressed with the Gospel of St. Matthew that he decided at once to film it. His picture is simple, stark, realistic, and at times incredibly beautiful. What is perhaps most remarkable, mainly because no one seems to have thought of it before, is that Pasolini uses the Matthew text as the script. While some of it has been rearranged and some of it, mainly parables, necessarily omitted, the Matthew Gospel is there, from the film's startling opening scenes between the obviously pregnant Mary and her disturbed betrothed, right to the finale at Galilee with the risen Jesus talking to the eleven: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. . . . I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world." So ends the Matthew and so ends this extraordinary film.

Whether or not Enrique Irazoqui, the Spanish student who portrays Christ, tallies with your conception of the Lord I cannot say. I found the lean, stern young man almost too austere at times. While he has a persuasive quality, he shows a smiling face only to children. Occasionally his acting is somewhat amateurish, and he seems to take himself so seriously that he has no time to love his neighbor, his followers, or even his mother. That Christ does love them is made clear in the context of the film.

It is, in fact, in the picture's spiritual aura that director Pasolini excels. His cast are non-professionals, mostly Communists, and they were chosen for their looks, not their acting ability. Pasolini uses a great many close-ups in "The Gospel" and he is especially successful in getting stirring responses on the expressive faces he photographs: the face of the older Mary (played by Pasolini's own mother) when Christ gives her a cold look and says, "These are my mother and my brethren"; Peter when he denies Christ; the apostles at the beautifully-photographed, unconventionally-arranged Last Supper; and the faces again and again of extras in brief scenes—the Wise Men, the Pharisees who question and try to trap Christ, the crowds who listen to the sermons. To Tonino Delli Colli, who photographed "The Gospel," must go much of the credit for the picture's success—not only for his exquisite close-ups, but also for many of the large compositions showing the countryside (southern Italy) and the battered town that was used for Jerusalem, and for many of the intimate scenes that might well have been inspired by Giotto.

Perhaps Pasolini's most difficult problems, and he did not solve them entirely satisfactorily, came during the filming of the discourses, especially the Sermon on the Mount. In spite of the stirring prose here (English subtitles taken from St. Matthew translate the Italian), these scenes have a static quality and begin to pall. I don't know how they should have been handled, especially since Pasolini was determined not to hoke up his film or get arty. Surprisingly the crucifixion, tasteful and underplayed as it is, is less dramatic than the tempestuous scene that precedes it showing Judas hanging himself.

There is some talk of having the version of "The Gospel" to be shown in the United States dubbed into English. I, for one, should prefer this version with the subtitles. But if the film could then win larger audiences, I'd not object to the dubbing. In any case, in the present version the Spaniard Irazoqui's voice has been dubbed into Italian. The film's running time (136 minutes) is excessive, but I'd be against any cutting. It is the accumulative effect of "The Gospel" with its many characters, sermons, miracles, and documentary realism that makes the whole so inspiring.

And if anyone is worried about the fact that this was made by a Marxist, let him relax. No doubt every film has some editorial point of view, and Pasolini is not adverse to startling us. His choice of music (Mozart, Prokofiev, Bach, and even a Negro spiritual like "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child") is by no means conventional. But Pasolini sticks to St. Matthew, and the God-Man described in it is not easy or conventional either. And if Pasolini has anything to say in the way of propaganda, he is saying, "This is the Founder of Christianity." And he might ask if Christians live according to His teachings. "The Gospel" could be considered a dialogue between its Marxist makers and its Christian and non-Christian viewers. The picture is dedicated to "the dear memory of Pope John."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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DOUGLAS L. FROST

THAT MARCH DAY

That March day
when the hill runs with clear water
and the sidewalk is wet between the cracks
and the earth is brown, soft, making mud
and the last crests of snow have left winter
shipwrecked
and the grass is suddenly greener
and the hedge is no more a barbed wire fence
and a crocus is up, open
and the sunset is longer
is Spring.

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BOOKS

The search for a unified portrait

The Three Lives of Charles De Gaulle

DAVID SCHOENBRUN

Atheneum, $6.95

WILSON C. McWILLIAMS

Charles de Gaulle once remarked that he "has no predecessors" and it seems more than likely that he will have no successors. Yet he may also lack genuine contemporaries, men who share his peculiar position in the history and consciousness of humanity. Schoenbrun is only the latest in a series of writers who have tried—and failed—to understand the spirit of Charles de Gaulle and to portray it to the men of his chronological times.

Schoenbrun's failure is partly due to his training as a reporter. His biography is anecdotal, often intolerably sketchy, lacking any effort to separate the significant from the trivial, abounding in dubious or inaccurate assertions about history, and studded with the clichés of the feature columnist. Yet Schoenburn is wise enough to realize that the three "de Gaulles" who emerge from journalistic analysis are somehow only differing expressions of a single personality.

Yet Schoenbrun's search for the unity that is Charles de Gaulle only serves to deprive him of the diverting and charming qualities of his reporter's "story." Attempting profound analysis, Schoen brun becomes only portentous, uttering dark platitudes and mystic pedantries. His final verdict on de Gaulle retreats to the cliché: de Gaulle is a brilliant archaism, devoted to a France which never existed save in his imagination and which cannot exist in the modern world; a man who would retard the unity of Europe and imperil that of the West because of his devotion to a fantasy world peopled by Teutons, Saxons, Gauls and Celts.

This, of course, is caricature; worse, it is caricature which contrives to miss the point. It is no reproach to a statesman that his vision of the state never existed. Indeed, political creativity is premised on just such a vision. Nor is it necessary that the vision be possible of attainment: it is enough that it stand as a polestar, the measuring rod of the merely possible. Political genius achieves brilliantly within the limits of a political situation; statecraft seeks to shape those limits. Hence, by the canons of ordinary men, there is something eccentric if not mad about the statesman. That fact establishes the statesman's task: he must translate his vision into language and action which seems, to his public, inspired and not insane. Yet he must take care, in so doing, not to be trapped by his public role (Schoenbrun quotes de Gaulle as remarking that "I knew I would have to reckon with this man, this General de Gaulle. I almost became his prisoner").

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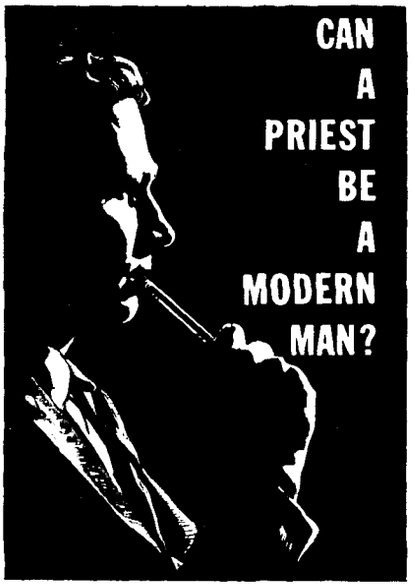

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Much that is puzzling in de Gaulle's pose and rhetoric can be understood by reference to the problem of the statesman. It is unlikely that a devotee of Bergson and Nietzsche (how unusual among the leaders of our time!) would be committed to the past. Indeed, Schoenbrun observes that in their appeals to Kennedy it was Khrushchev who invoked the American past and the age of F.D.R., while de Gaulle sought support from a younger, future-oriented America.

Yet France was not a state whose people were inclined to pursue a vision of the political future. Most were deeply disposed to regard politics as meaningless and to retreat into privatism and despair. De Gaulle's greatest enemy was neither the O.A.S. nor the Anglo-Saxons: it was the style of thought whose doyen is Jean Paul Sartre. The Olympian disdain with which the intellectuals masked their retreat from politics was pose only, as Sartre's own political affinities reveal. Political withdrawal concealed a yearning for control, a love for power as such, an impatience with restraints on the individual will, a rage against nature and the world.

Nothing rings truer than de Gaulle's thesis that a nation cannot live without "grandeur," for grandeur is only one equivalent of dignity—the conviction that we collectively and I individually are more than flotsam on the impersonal tide of history. Against the fury of dignity denied, de Gaulle offered the rhetoric of the past: of Christian, Gallic, Roman France, the bulwark of the West and of civility. Yet the rhetoric of the past was used only because, among the idioms of de Gaulle's public, it corresponds most closely to his image of France's future.

Nor does Schoenbrun understand de Gaulle's diplomacy. France, as de Gaulle is well aware, depends on the United States. Her danger, as he seems to perceive it, is that America may desert Europe in favor of closer ties with the U.S.S.R., and de Gaulle's animus against Britain is due to the fact that her "special relationship" protects her against the vagaries of American diplomacy. This attitude unites the two periods of de Gaulle's diplomacy: his intransigence toward the Soviet Union in Berlin and his series of advances to non-Western nations, especially to China. Strong-arm or coquetry, de Gaulle's tactics have a constant aim: to convince the Atlantic allies that France must be considered if not wooed; that France is not passive in the face of new forces and a new age; that France—and Frenchmen—still have dignity.

None of this is an endorsement of de Gaulle or of his vision of France. It is only to assert that an assessment of this

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extraordinary man who has shaped France forever even if he fails in his own dream must wait for his true contemporary: one with the imagination, intelligence and passion to see, appreciate and evaluate that ideal France to which de Gaulle has devoted his life. Mr. Schoenbrun is not up to the task; his major merit lies in demonstrating that it remains to be performed.

Rejoyce

ANTHONY BURGESS

Norton, $5

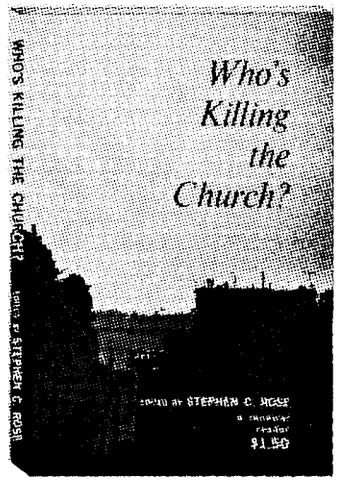
THOMAS F. STALEY

Joyce has long been the darling of American academic critics. Thus far in the 1960s there have been over twenty book-length studies of his work published in this country; they range from brief introductory volumes (a subject which hardly lends itself to brevity) to long, learned and often boring treatises on single chapters of *Ulysses*. However, at last a British novelist, Anthony Burgess (*Nothing Like the Sun, A Clockwork Orange*), has turned critic in order to free Joyce from the pedantry of academe and take his readers through the rich labyrinthine fabric of Joyce's art.

For the most part, Burgess ignores the multitude of scholarship which has come out of what the British call the "Joyce Industry." He spares us detailed and learned footnotes on the Joycean idiosyncratics, such as epiphanies, parallax, ancient heresies, Viconian theories, multistructured word origins, occult allusions and other such swamps in which so many of his predecessors have been mired. As he states in the preface, his book ". . . .does not pretend to scholarship, only to a desire to help the average reader who wants to know Joyce's work but has been scared off by the professors."

To take this course is not without its hazards. First of all Burgess' preface is written for a British audience. In America, *Finnegans Wake* might well be in hands of the professors, but *A Portrait* has been a best seller on college

How to get from the comfortable pew to the secular city and still be honest to God.



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campuses, both in and out of the classrooms, for two decades, and *Ulysses* is the second largest seller in Random House's Modern Library Series. Secondly, the author's lack of concern for what has previously been written on Joyce gets him into trouble. For example, he admits his debt to Stuart Gilbert's *James Joyce's Ulysses* and Campbell and Robinson's famous *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake*. Both of these studies are over twenty years old and clearly dated; furthermore, they draw the "average reader" into a morass of occult references which distort, confuse and only seldom illuminate. Had Burgess looked at more recent studies by William T. Noon, S.J., W.Y. Tindall, A. Walton Litz, Clive Hart, R.M. Kain, and Joseph Prescott, his view would perhaps have been more tempered.

Whatever faults this book has, however, are minor and hardly detract from its eloquent style, rich good humor and, more important, its illumination of Joyce's contribution to twentieth century literature. Every page reveals Burgess' deep admiration and sheer pleasure. Writing of Joyce's language, he says that Joyce ". . . presses every drop of water out of his cooked cabbage." Joyce's use of rhythm and language have never been treated with more wit and understanding. With his novelist's ear for sound. Burgess catches Joyce's use of diction, idiom, syntax, and word transformations.

He plunges into the always hot debate concerning the influence of the Church on Joyce's work and emerges with an amazingly clear and accurate appraisal: "It is typical of Joyce that, creating a religion of art to replace his Catholicism, he has to formulate his aesthetic in the terms of the schoolmen, and that his very premises come out of Aquinas (erroneously). He cannot slough the Church off, he can never become completely emancipated. In *Ulysses* he is obsessed with the mystical identity of Father and Son; in *Finnegans Wake* his only real theme is that of Resurrection."

After a cursory glance at *Dubliners*, Burgess writes a delightful chapter on Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's hero in *A Portrait* and also a major character in *Ulysses*. When discussing Stephen's formulation of complex aesthetic theories, he cautions the reader that "we are already in deep philosophical waters." Urbanity and humor are dispersed throughout the book. For example, in beginning his discussion of *Ulysses* he tells us of Joyce's personal difficulties: "The Odyssey of *Ulysses* makes very painful reading. After the seven-year labor of writing the book – poverty, eye-disease, the disruption of a European war – came the hell of trying to get it into print. Even, for the matter, into typescript: much of the 'Circe' episode was burned by the disgusted husband of a volunteer typist."

Hardly a page goes by that the reader will not be struck by the wry wit, the beautiful style, the bold statements, and the sheer exuberance with which Burgess approaches his subject. For him the book was clearly, as he suggests, a labor of love and he fulfills his purpose grandly; he has conveyed his great joy in reading a master of our century.

Burgess refuses to allow us to be intimidated by the complexity of *Ulysses* or to be frightened away from the richness of *Finnegans Wake*. His book ends with a plea that we not be contented with the mundane and that we go to the great works of art to be truly entertained. "Joyce continues to set the highest standards of any author except Shakespeare, Milton, Pope and Hopkins to those who aspire to writing well . . . But when we have read him and absorbed even an iota of his substance, neither literature nor life can ever be quite the same again."

CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 627*)

who betrayed his mother to the police: '. . . . I can't have him pretending there's something in common between him and me. It's in your heart that counts. There was love in my heart, not hate.' "

And then Curley quotes Raleigh to show the reasoning behind this; "For, morally, O'Neill is an intentionalist, and everything is forgivable except an evil motivation. Because Hickey *thought* he loved when he hated, he is higher on the moral scale than Parritt who hated his mother and knew it."

When all is said and done, I think that this is what Father McCabe was saying, that just having a good intention is insufficient in some very important cases, that through God's Word we have not just maxims but descriptions of

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reality to which our conduct must conform.

"Because Hickey *thought* he loved when he hated . . ."; this sums up the fallacy of Dr. Fletcher's arguments. Or does he believe that men are now delivered from self-deception, especially in regard to the relations of man and woman?

So thank you for the essay on O'Neill, the playwright who has said in a few lines what it takes the moral theologian a few pages to write. JOHN F. KIPPLEY

St. John's

Port Washington, N.Y.

To the Editors: It is not generally known that St. John's University violated its own statutes in summarily dismissing 31 faculty members without a statement of specific charges and without a hearing. An investigating team of the American Association of University Professors made the discovery only recently. When the disclosure was made to a meeting of the St. John's Chapter of the AAUP, it came as a shock to the 200 members who were present. Even today most faculty members are not aware that the University violated its own laws.

The statutes relating to the dismissal or suspension of a faculty member, tenured or untenured, require the officers of the university to notify him in writing of the specific charges against him and to grant him the right of a hearing before a special committee consisting of seven members of the faculty at least four of whom must be laymen. (Article 5.7)

The statutes are not easily available. The university library does not have a copy. Few faculty members have ever seen them, although they are an integral part of their contracts. (Each contract contains the clause: "This agreement shall be interpreted and construed in the light of the provisions of the university entitled 'University Faculty', a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof." But no copy ever accompanies the contract.)

On December 22, 1965, just after the mass dismissals and before the strike began, the Very Rev. Joseph T. Cahill, C.M. issued a statement in which he said: "In all cases the university has acted in complete accordance with the requirements of law and the statutes of the university."

It is difficult to see how Father Cahill's statement can be reconciled with the provision of the university statutes which were in force at the time of the mass dismissals.

FRANCIS GRIFFITH
Chairman, Department of Curriculum and Teaching,
St. John's University

REVIEWERS

WILSON C. MC WILLIAMS *is an instructor in Government at Oberlin College, Ohio. He is co-author with George A. Lanyi of* Crisis and Continuity in World Politics.

THOMAS F. STALEY *is a professor of English at the University of Tulsa and Editor of the* James Joyce Quarterly.

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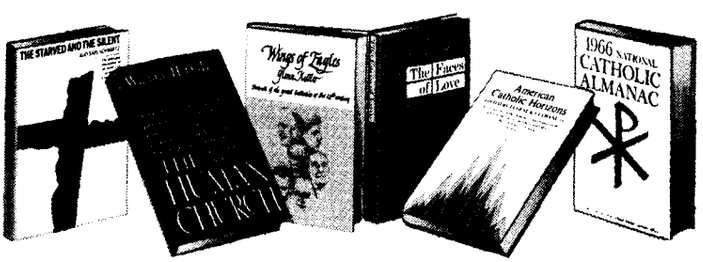

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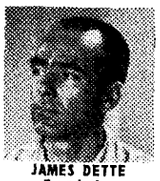

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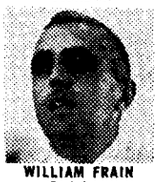
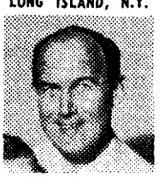


WILLIAM FRAIN
Sociology
LONG ISLAND, N.Y.



JOHN SULLIVAN
Solid State Physics
BRAZIL

ESPECIALLY NEEDED: *Christians, professionally competent, who purposefully serve in public, private, denominational and voluntary positions, programs and structures of significance—in the developing nations, and in U.S. based international efforts.*

The Association for International Development

We (here shown) and all members urge you to consider associating with us.

25 New Members Will Be Invited In 1966

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Agronomy
BOLIVIA

EDWARD KIRCHNER
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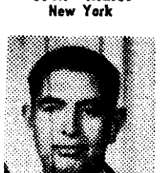
New York



ARTURO VIGIL
Credit Union Programs
MEXICO

What Is A.I.D.? Why Associate Together?

A.I.D. IS an association of persons from various nations who dedicate themselves and their professional skills to the development of international social justice and human solidarity, especially in the developing regions (Latin America, Asia, Africa) of the world or in U.S. based programs.

THEY SERVE IN VARIOUS POSITIONS in many organizations, institutions, and programs, governmental, private, denominational, voluntary.

WHILE SERVING IN these positions they associate across borders so as to encourage, stimulate and encourage each other: intellectually, spiritually, interculturally, professionally, in their families, and as friends.

MEN AND WOMEN, husbands and wives, are members equally. All are committed to a genuine secularity within the framework of Christian principles.

AS AN ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS, the members conduct training programs, institutes, forums, publications. Recognized and encouraged by Church leaders, the association is distinctly lay, working through a secretariat, managed by members, governed in its policy and programs by the members themselves through their elected representatives.

THE ASSOCIATION was founded by Catholic laymen in 1957. Since that time members have been in India, Korea, Malaysia, Syria, Japan, Basutoland, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico, Venezuela, Canada and U.S.

THOMAS QUIGLEY
International Programs
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SAM MONDELLO
Student Exchange
COLOMBIA

JOSE ALVAREZ
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If you wish to learn more

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